

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A system for automatically deploying a plurality of network
2 devices, comprising:

3 a memory storing a template which contains a sequence of
4 commands for configuring each of a plurality of devices of a given type, wherein
5 each command that refers to a particular device contains a variable as the
6 identification of the device;

7 a database storing a record which indicates the respective network
8 address of each specific device for which a given device is to be configured; and

9 an interface responsive to a command to configure a given device
10 for retrieving said template and the stored record associated with said given
11 device, substituting the network addresses in the retrieved record for the variables
12 in said template, and issuing commands to configure the given device in
13 accordance with said retrieved record and said template.

1 2. The system of claim 1 wherein said network addresses comprise
2 Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.

1 3. The system of claim 1 wherein a plurality of templates are stored
2 in said memory, each corresponding to a different respective type of device.

1 4. The system of claim 3 wherein said templates are stored in said
2 database.

1 5. The system of claim 1 wherein said interface issues said
2 commands in a format generic to a plurality of different types of devices, and
3 further including a library containing converters for converting said generic

4 commands into device-specific commands to be applied to individual network
5 devices.

1 6. The system of claim 5 wherein said converters transmit each of
2 said device-specific commands in accordance with a transmission protocol
3 corresponding to the individual devices, respectively.

1 7. The system of claim 6 wherein one of said transmission protocols
2 comprises Telnet.

1 8. A method for automatically deploying a plurality of network
2 devices, comprising the following steps:
3 storing a template which contains a sequence of commands for
4 configuring each of a plurality of devices of a given type, wherein each command
5 that refers to a particular device contains a variable as the identification of the
6 device;
7 storing a record in a database which indicates the respective
8 network address of each specific device for which a given device is to be
9 configured; and
10 in response to a command to configure a given device, retrieving
11 said template and the stored record associated with said given device, substituting
12 the network addresses in the retrieved record for the variables in said template,
13 and issuing commands to configure the given device in accordance with said
14 retrieved record and said template.

1 9. The method of claim 8 wherein said network addresses comprise
2 Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.

1 10. The method of claim 8 including the step of storing a plurality of
2 templates, each corresponding to a different respective type of device.

1 11. The method of claim 10 wherein said templates are stored in said
2 database.

1 12. The method of claim 8 wherein said commands are issued in a
2 format generic to a plurality of different types of devices, and further including the
3 step of converting said generic commands into device-specific commands to be
4 applied to individual network devices.

1 13. The method of claim 12 further including the step of transmitting
2 each of said device-specific commands in accordance with a transmission protocol
3 corresponding to the individual devices, respectively.

1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein one of said transmission
2 protocols comprises Telnet.